

Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (For National Security)

Read this information carefully. Follow the instructions fully or we cannot process your form.

Why do we need the information you will give us and how will we use it?

The U.S. Government has conducted background investigations for over 50 years. It does this to establish that applicants for or incumbents in sensitive positions, either employed by the Government or working for the Government under contract, are eligible for a required security clearance or for performing sensitive duties. We use the information from this form primarily as the basis for an investigation that will be used to determine your eligibility for a national security position.

The information you give us is for Official Use Only; we will protect it from unauthorized disclosure. Authorized disclosures include the Privacy Act Routine Uses shown on this form. The information you provide in response to question 25a on use of illegal drugs will not be provided for use in any criminal proceedings against you.

Giving us the information we ask is voluntary. However, we may not be able to complete your investigation, or complete it in a timely manner, if you don't give us each item of information we request. This may affect your placement or clearance prospects.

What authority do we have to ask you for the information requested on this form?

The U.S. Government is authorized to ask for this information under Executive Order 10450; section 2165 of title 42, U.S. Code; parts 5,732, and 736 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, and other statutes authorizing background investigations. We ask for your Social Security number to keep our records accurate, because other people may have the same name and birth date. Executive Order 9397 also asks Federal agencies to use this number to help identify individuals in agency records.

What is the investigative process?

Background investigations for national security are conducted to develop information to show whether or not a person is reliable, trustworthy, of good conduct and character, and loyal to the United States. The information you provide on this form, including any specific agency instructions of Question 14c., and any other special instructions, is confirmed by investigation. Your current employer must be contacted, even if you indicate on your SF 171, or other form, that you do not want the present employer contacted. In addition to the questions on this form, inquiry also is made about a person's adherence to security requirements, mental or health disorders, dishonest conduct, sexual misconduct, vulnerability to blackmail or coercion, falsification, misrepresentation and any other behavior, activities, or associations that tend to show the person is not reliable, trustworthy, or loyal.

An interview with you is a normal part of the investigative process. This Personal Subject Interview is generally the first step in the investigation, and is conducted under oath, affirmation, or unsworn declaration. It provides you the opportunity to update, clarify, and explain more completely information on your form, which often helps to complete your investigation faster.

If your investigation requires a Personal Subject Interview, you will be contacted in advance by telephone or mail to arrange a time and location for the interview. It is important that the interview be conducted as soon as possible after you are contacted. Postponements will delay the processing of your investigation. Declining an interview may result in your investigation being delayed or canceled.

You will be asked to bring identification with your picture on it, such as a valid State driver's license, to the interview. There are other documents you may be asked to bring to verify your identity as well. These include: documentation of any legal name change; Social Security card; and/or birth certificate.

Documents that verify any significant claims or activities may also be requested, for example: alien registration; naturalization certificate; originals or certified copies of college transcripts or degrees; high school diploma; professional license(s) or certificates(s); military discharge certificate(s) (DD Form 214); marriage certificate(s); passport; and/or business license(s). You may also be asked to bring documents that pertain to information provided in your answers to questions on the form or other matters requiring specific attention. These matters include: termination or discharge from employment; delinquent loans or taxes, bankruptcy, judgments, liens, or other financial obligations; and arrests, convictions, probations and/or parole.

Who makes a final determination?

Final determination on your eligibility for a national security position and your being granted a clearance is the responsibility of the OPM or the Federal agency that requested your investigation. You may be provided the opportunity to personally explain, refute, or clarify any information before a final decision is made.

How is this form organized?

This form has two parts. Part 1 asks for background information, including where you have lived, gone to school, and worked. Part 2 asks about your activities and such matters as firings from a job, criminal history record, use of illegal drugs and alcohol consumption. In answering Part 2, you should keep in mind that your answers to questions are considered together with the information obtained in the investigation to reach an appropriate adjudication for a sensitive position.

What are the penalties for inaccurate or false statements?

The U.S. Criminal Code provides that knowingly falsifying or concealing a material fact is a felony which may result in fines of up to \$10,000, or 5 years imprisonment, or both. In addition, Federal agencies generally fire, do not grant clearance, or disqualify individuals who have materially and deliberately falsified these forms, and this remains a part of your permanent record for future placements. Because the position for which you are being considered is a sensitive one, your trustworthiness is a very important consideration in deciding your eligibility for security clearance. Your prospects of placement or clearance are better if you answer all questions truthfully and completely. In the course of an interview with a Federal official you will have adequate opportunity to explain